

PRESENTING, DELIVERING AND INSTALLING ELECTRONIC DOWNLOADS WITH AN INSTALLED LIST

BACKGROUND

[0001] The present invention relates to downloading and updating software.

[0002] Software applications are used to perform specific tasks on a computer. Typically, before a user can use a software application on a specific computer, the software must be installed onto the computer. Although at the time of installation, the software might be the most current version available, software vendors frequently release updates and corrections to specific software applications. These updates might improve performance, correct errors, or add enhanced capabilities to the software application. The updates might be available on the Internet, or on fixed media such as a floppy disk, CD-ROM, or DVD.

[0003] Typically, in order to simplify the process of applying updates and corrections to software applications already installed, some sort of update application is also included with the software. However, these update applications are frequently limited to only being able to update the software application that the update application is associated with. Further, update applications generally display only the updates that have not yet been installed. A typical user has no way of knowing about the update components that have previously been installed. In addition, update applications generally only permit the installation of new updates not previously installed, and have no capability for the reinstallation of previously installed updates.

SUMMARY

[0004] In general, in one aspect, the invention features a computer program product, tangibly embodied in an information carrier. The computer program product can include instructions operable to cause a computer to obtain a plurality of manifest files, each manifest file containing information corresponding to one or more components. The computer program product can also include instructions operable to cause a computer to display information contained in each manifest file in a dual-list format, where a first list displays a component name for each component listed in each manifest file, including components installed and not installed on the computer, a second list displays the component name for each component of the first list that is installed on the computer, and the component names in the first list are displayed aligned with the component names in the second list such that the component name of each installed component that appears in the first list is displayed aligned with the component name of the same installed component on the second list.

[0005] Advantageous implementations include one or more of the following features. Each manifest file may be associated with an installed product on the computer. Each manifest file may be associated with marketing materials available for download. The marketing materials may include marketing announcements, new products, free products, or trial products. The computer program product may include instructions operable to cause a computer to identify the installed products on the computer from a single file located on the user computer. The single file may be a

settings file. The computer program product may also include instructions operable to cause a computer to identify each installed component on the computer from a keyfile associated with each installed component. The first list and the second list may be displayed in a hierarchical structure in which component names identified with a first installed product are displayed together and that component names identified with a second installed product are displayed together, but the component names associated with both the first installed product and the second installed product are displayed together, separate from the component names associated solely with either the first or second installed products, and the component names associated with the first installed product are displayed separate from the component names associated with the second installed product. The component names associated with each installed product may be displayed in alphabetical, date of creation, or subject order. Each manifest file may contain version information for each individual component. The computer program product may also include instructions to compare version information extracted from each installed product with version information contained in the manifest file. The manifest file may contain the following information for each individual component: a name for the component, a short description of the component, a relative path pointing to a local file showing the component version on the client computer, any dependencies that must be present before the component file can be installed, and a pointer to the location of the component file. The pointer may be in the form of a uniform resource locator or a web service call. The short description of the component may be displayed to the user.

[0006] In another aspect, the invention features a computer program product, tangibly embodied in an information carrier. The computer program product can include instructions operable to cause a computer to identify one or more installed products on the computer. The computer program product can also include instructions operable to cause a computer to obtain one or more manifest files, where each manifest file is associated with one installed product and each manifest file contains information relating to one or more components of the corresponding installed product. The computer program product can further include instructions operable to cause a computer to display information contained in each manifest file in a dual-list format, where a first list displays a component name for each component listed in each manifest file, including components installed and not installed on the computer, a second list displays the component name for each component of the first list that is installed on the computer, and the component names in the first list are displayed aligned with the component names in the second list such that the component name of each installed component that appears in the first list is displayed aligned with the component name of the same installed component on the second list.

[0007] Advantageous implementations include one or more of the following features. Each manifest file obtained may be selected from a plurality of available manifest files. The computer program product may include instructions operable to cause a computer to identify each installed component on the computer from a keyfile associated with each installed component. The first list and the second list may be displayed in a hierarchical structure in which component names identified with a first installed product are displayed together and that component names identified with